

## CONSTRUCTION

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Erosion controls that aren't maintained can cause excessive amounts of sediment and debris to be carried into the stormwater system. Construction vehicles can leak fuel, oil, and other harmful fluids that can be picked up by stormwater and deposited into local waterbodies.

- Divert stormwater away from disturbed or exposed areas of the construction site.
- Install silt fences, vehicle mud removal areas, vegetative cover, and other sediment and erosion controls and properly maintain them, especially after rainstorms.
- Prevent soil erosion by minimizing disturbed areas during construction projects, and seed and mulch bare areas as soon as possible.

## AUTOMOTIVE FACILITIES

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Uncovered fueling stations allow spills to be washed into storm drains. Cars waiting to be repaired can leak fuel, oil, and other harmful fluids that can be picked up by stormwater.

- Clean up spills immediately and properly dispose of cleanup materials.
- Provide cover over fueling stations and design or retrofit facilities for spill containment.
- Properly maintain fleet vehicles to prevent oil, gas, and other discharges from being washed into local waterbodies.
- Install and maintain oil/water separators.

## OIL & STORMWATER DON'T MIX

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Oil does not dissolve in water. It lasts a long time and sticks to everything. Oil and other petroleum products are toxic to people, wildlife and plants. One pint of oil can make a slick larger than a football field. The small drips, drops and leaks of oil from our cars and trucks accumulate on our roads, driveways and parking lots and when it rains it's washed into our streams, rivers and lakes. Used motor oil is the largest single source of oil pollution in our waters. Americans spill 180 million gallons of used oil each year into our waters. This is 16 times the amount spilled by the Exxon Valdez in Alaska.

- Stop drips. Check for oil leaks regularly and fix them promptly. Keep your vehicle tuned to reduce oil use.
- Use ground cloths or drip pans beneath your vehicle if you have leaks or are doing engine work. Clean up spills immediately. Collect all used oil in containers with tight fitting lids. Do not mix different engine fluids.
- Never dispose of oil or other engine fluids down the storm drain, on the ground or into a ditch.
- Recycle used motor oil. Many auto supply stores and gas stations will accept used oil.

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Montana Department of Transportation



# Do Your Part TO PREVENT STORMWATER POLLUTION

Stormwater runoff is one of the most common causes of water pollution.

Rainwater and snowmelt runs off streets, lawns, parking lots and construction and industrial sites and picks up fertilizers, dirt, pesticides, oil and grease, and many other pollutants. Stormwater is discharged untreated into the waterbodies we use for swimming, fishing and providing drinking water.

You can help protect Montana's streams, rivers, lakes and wetlands by following the practices described in this brochure.

For more information on what you can do to prevent stormwater pollution visit:  
<http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/prevent.html>

## LAWN CARE

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Excess fertilizers and pesticides applied to lawns and gardens wash off and pollute streams. In addition, yard clippings and leaves can wash into storm drains and contribute nutrients and organic matter to streams.

Organic matter decomposes in a process that removes oxygen from the water. Fish and other aquatic organisms can't exist in water with low dissolved oxygen levels.

- Don't over water your lawn. Consider using a soaker hose instead of a sprinkler.
- Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly. When use is necessary, use these chemicals in the recommended amounts. Use organic mulch or safer pest control methods whenever possible.
- Compost or mulch yard waste. Don't leave it in the street or sweep it into storm drains, ditches, or streams.
- Cover piles of dirt or mulch being used in landscaping projects.

## AUTO CARE

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- Washing your car and degreasing auto parts at home can send detergents and other contaminants through the storm sewer system. Dumping automotive fluids into storm drains has the same result as dumping the materials directly into a waterbody.
- Use a commercial car wash that treats or recycles its wastewater, or wash your car on your yard so the water infiltrates into the ground.
- Repair leaks and dispose of used auto fluids and batteries at designated drop-off or recycling locations.

## HOUSEHOLD CHEMICALS

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Household hazardous wastes like insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, used motor oil, and other auto fluids can poison aquatic life.

- Recycle or properly dispose of household products that contain chemicals, such as insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, and used motor oil and other auto fluids.
- Don't pour household chemicals onto the ground or into storm drains.

## SEPTIC SYSTEMS

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Leaking and poorly maintained septic systems release nutrients and pathogens (bacteria and viruses) that can be picked up by stormwater and discharged into nearby waterbodies. Pathogens can cause public health problems and environmental concerns.

- Inspect your system every three years and pump your tank as necessary (every three to five years)
- Don't dispose of household hazardous waste in sinks or toilets.

## PET WASTE

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Pet waste can be a major source of bacteria and excess nutrients in local waters. Leaving pet waste on the ground increases public health risks by allowing harmful bacteria and nutrients to wash into the storm drain and eventually into local waterbodies.

- When walking your pet or cleaning your yard, remember to pick up pet waste and dispose of it properly. Placing it in the trash or flushing it are the best disposal methods.

## RESIDENTIAL LANDSCAPING

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Properly designed residential landscaping can play a key role in preventing water pollution.

- Permeable Pavement - Traditional concrete and asphalt don't allow water to soak into the ground. Instead these surfaces rely on storm drains to divert unwanted water. Permeable pavement systems allow rain and snowmelt to soak through, decreasing stormwater runoff.
- Rain Gardens and Grassy Swales – Specially designed areas planted with native plants can provide natural places for rainwater to collect and soak into the ground. Rain from rooftop areas or paved areas can be diverted into these areas rather than into storm drains.
- Vegetated Filter Strips - Filter strips are areas of native grass or plants created along roadways or streams. They trap the pollutants stormwater picks up as it flows across driveways and streets.

## COMMERCIAL

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Dirt, oil, and debris that collect in parking lots and paved areas can be washed into the storm sewer system and eventually enter local waterbodies.

- Sweep up litter and debris from sidewalks, driveways and parking lots, especially around storm drains.
- Cover grease storage and dumpsters and keep them clean to avoid leaks.
- Report any chemical spill to the local hazardous waste cleanup team. They'll know the best way to keep spills from harming the environment.